

# **Sixth District Perspectives with Congressman Ben Cline**

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As the crisis at our southern border continues, the Republican-led House Judiciary Committee last week fought against the intransigence of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, who failed to uphold our Nation's laws. We also passed a resolution denouncing Biden's failed border policies that have turned every community into a border community. House Republicans also delivered on our commitment to protecting Americans and preventing foreign adversaries from targeting, surveilling, and manipulating Americans through online applications. As we head into another week of session, I will continue fighting for the good people of Virginia's Sixth District.

### **Oversight Into Biden's Broken Border**

The deteriorating border under Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas and President Biden is one of the top concerns for people across the Sixth District and throughout our country. Every month another record is set as hundreds of thousands of people cross the border and our communities are being ravaged by drug trafficking, human trafficking, and sex trafficking. The Biden administration's failing open-border policies have also played a role in the unnecessary loss of many American lives, like Laken Riley, whose life was brought to a tragic end by a 26-year-old illegal immigrant who never should have been in our country in the first place. That is why we have impeached Secretary Mayorkas, and I am proud to be an impeachment manager who will argue the case before the Senate.

As a member of the House Judiciary Committee, I am committed to ensuring government transparency, which is why I joined my colleagues Judiciary Chairman Jim Jordan and Representative McClintock in sending a letter to DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas for failing to respond to our February 27th request for their agency's documents on Laken Riley's murderer and expressing our concerns with their lack of transparency.

Per the constitution, Congress is tasked with oversight of federal government agencies and to ensure that they are working for citizens. However, the Department of Homeland Security continues to stonewall the release of crucial documents related to the border crisis including the release of Laken Riley's murderer's case file.

While accountability for the broken border ultimately rests with the President, I believe Biden and Secretary Mayorkas clearly have no interest in doing their jobs to secure the border. With that in mind, it's time for Congress to do what needs to be done and fix the problem. If they will not act, then we must do everything we can to act for them and hold them accountable.



The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
March 14, 2024  
Page 2  
free to commit this horrific crime despite previously committing crimes in Georgia<sup>1</sup> and New York.  
On February 27, 2024, we wrote to you requesting information and documents regarding Barra, including, but not limited to, his alien file.<sup>2</sup> We requested a response by March 12.<sup>3</sup> To date, however, DHS has not provided the requested information. DHS's failure to produce the requested information prevents the Committee from fulfilling its constitutional oversight obligations. Accordingly, we write to reiterate our outstanding requests in our February 27, 2024 letter, which is attached for your convenience. Please provide this information as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 28, 2024. Please be advised that the Committee will use compulsory process if these requests remain outstanding.

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3617 7th St. S.W.  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

The Committee on the Judiciary continues to conduct oversight of the Biden Administration's enforcement of federal immigration law. We write about our outstanding request for basic immigration information about Jose Antonio Barra, the illegal alien who murdered 22-year-old Augusta University nursing student Laken Riley.

On February 23, 2024, Barra was arrested in connection with the kidnapping and murder of Laken on February 22.<sup>4</sup> According to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Biden Administration released Barra into the United States in 2022 after he "entered the U.S. illegally from Venezuela,"<sup>5</sup> providing him into the country<sup>6</sup> despite his reported affiliation with the dangerous Tren de Aragua gang.<sup>7</sup> The Biden Administration's policies, articulated in your September 30, 2021, memorandum, prevent ICE from prioritizing others for removable aliens for arrest until such aliens commit a "serious crime."<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, Laken's alleged murderer was

Sincerely,  
*J. Jordan*  
Jim Jordan  
Chairman  
*Ben Clive*  
Ben Clive  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Responsiveness and  
Accountability to Oversight  
*J. McInnes*  
Tom McInnes  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Immigration  
Integrity, Security, and Enforcement

cc: The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler, Ranking Member  
The Honorable Pramila Jayapal, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Immigration  
Integrity, Security, and Enforcement  
The Honorable Eric Swalwell, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Responsiveness and  
Accountability to Oversight

Enclosure  
<sup>1</sup> Patrick Ruffly, *Nursing student Laken Riley did not know suspected killer Jose Barra, who is not a US citizen*, N.Y. Post (Feb. 23, 2024, 4:41 PM), <https://nypost.com/2024/02/23/us-news/laken-riley-did-not-know-suspected-killer-jose-barra-ops/>.  
<sup>2</sup> *Dev. Report in murder of Georgia nursing student entered U.S. illegally, had previously been arrested*, ICE says, CBS News (Feb. 26, 2024, 7:50 PM), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/jose-barra-suspect-murder-georgia-nursing-student-illegal-entry-ice-says/>.  
<sup>3</sup> Ashley B. Williams, Raja Ranaik, & Pinella Alvarez, *New details emerge following arrest in case of murdered University of Georgia staffer*, CNN (Feb. 25, 2024), <https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/25/us/georgia-laken-riley-murder/index.html>.  
<sup>4</sup> Justin East, *Migrant charged with Laken Riley's murder early entered US despite links to bloodthirsty gang*, Associated Press (Feb. 23, 2024), <https://apnews.com/2024/02/23/us-immigration-charged-with-murdering-laken-riley-early-path-us/>.  
<sup>5</sup> Memorandum from Alejandro N. Mayorkas, Sec'y Dep't of Homeland Sec., to Tom Johnson, Acting Dir., U.S. Image and Customs Est., et al., "Guidelines for the Enforcement of Civil Immigration Law" (Sept. 30, 2021), <https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2021/09/30-2021-ICE-Enforcement-Guidelines.pdf>.  
<sup>6</sup> Ronin Martin, *Laken Riley case: Suspect had been arrested by federal, local authorities*, ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION (Feb. 26, 2024), <https://www.ajc.com/news/suspect-in-student-death-in-aga-crime-for-neighborhooding-in-atlanta/KONQZMOLRBNF8HQZQZ279/>.  
<sup>7</sup> *Dev. supra note 2*.  
<sup>8</sup> Letter from Jim Jordan et al., Chairman, H. Comm. on the Judiciary, to Alejandro Mayorkas Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of Homeland Sec. (Feb. 27, 2024), <https://www.judiciary.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/27-2024-ICE-Enforcement-Guidelines.pdf>.

## Protecting American Data

In the fast-evolving landscape of global technology, the threats to our national security have taken on new forms, enabling foreign powers to reach directly into the pockets of American citizens. That's why last week, House Republicans passed the "Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act," which is a crucial step in safeguarding our nation's security and ensuring that the American people are not targets of manipulation, surveillance, or targeting through online applications by foreign governments.

The bill prohibits marketplaces—like app stores and web hosting services—from hosting applications controlled by foreign adversaries of the United States, including the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This includes applications like TikTok, owned by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-controlled ByteDance, which pose a clear and present danger to the American way of life. Unless TikTok is no longer controlled by a PRC-based entity that poses a national security risk, the application will be banned in the U.S. from app store availability and web hosting services.

This isn't about politics. It's about protecting the well-being of our citizens and our country's future from the hands of foreign adversaries.

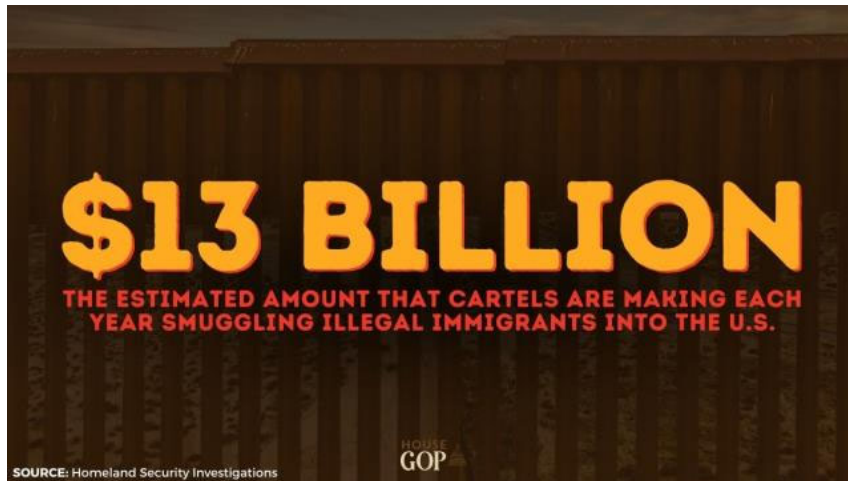
## Condemning Biden's Open Border Policies

Since Biden took office, his actions have systematically dismantled the security of our nation's borders. From day one, President Biden wielded his executive power to halt the construction of our border wall, overturn President Trump's orders that ensured the enforcement of our immigration laws, remove restrictions on immigration from countries with ties to terrorism, and enact policies that encourage illegal border crossings. These actions represent only the tip of the iceberg.

Our country has seen an influx of over 8 million illegal immigrants since Biden took office. To put this into perspective, that is a population greater than Virginia, as well as 36 of our states, and has included 169 individuals identified on the terrorist watchlist. These figures are not just statistics, but are also a direct threat to our national security and the well-being of our communities. The truth is, President Biden has the power to secure our borders as swiftly as he chose to open them, and yet, he opts against it, prioritizing the interests of politics over the safety and security of American citizens.

In response, House Republicans have taken decisive action. Several months ago, we passed H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act, aimed at halting the tide of illegal migration and safeguarding our

communities. Despite our efforts, our legislation has been met with resistance from a Democrat-led Senate and a White House that seem more invested in shifting blame than in securing our borders. Last week, House Republicans voted once again in favor of legislation that denounces the Biden Administration's immigration policies. It's long past time for the Biden administration to support real reform or utilize the tools they have available to them to fix the border crisis that they created.



### **Casework Highlight: Department of State: U.S. Passports**

Since early February, Passport Services' processing times have risen due to a seasonal increase in applications and many countries require your passport to be valid for at least six months in order to enter. Processing times can be 6-8 weeks for routine processing and 2-3 weeks for expedited processing. These times do not include mail delivery service estimates.

Does your family have plans to travel out of the country this summer and need passport assistance? My office is here to help. For general questions, please visit the Department of State's [website](#) for more information. If you need help securing your passport, or expediting its renewal or processing in emergency circumstances, please call any of my district offices listed below and on my website at [Cline.House.Gov](#).



### **District Travels**



*I had a great afternoon speaking to Government classes at Turner Ashby High School. It's always a pleasure to discuss the workings of our government and hear fresh perspectives directly from bright young minds.*

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Congressman. If my office can ever be of assistance, please contact my Washington office at (202) 225-5431.

For the latest updates from Washington and across the Sixth District, please follow my Facebook and Twitter pages.

*Ben Clive*